

StepByStep, Recovery Newsletter

Volume 5, Issue 1
September 2011

Up Coming Events:

Sept 29—Alumni Dinner—Anyone who has ever been in the StepByStep Recovery, Inc. Program is invited!

Call for more information

September is... National Recovery Month
Prevention Works - Treatment is Effective - People Recover
SEPTEMBER 2011

CONTACT US

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Quote of the Month

Develop an attitude of gratitude, and give thanks for everything that happens to you, knowing that every step forward is a step toward achieving something bigger and better than your current situation.
Brian Tracy

From our Director...

Seven days without prayer makes one weak.

**With Love & Gratitude,
Bridget Hall**

Gwinnett County Detention Center Arrest Report for July 2011 (unofficial)

Total Arrested	3119	Percentage
Drug/Alcohol Related	699	22%
Males	557	80%
Females	142	20%

From our hearts...

Before I came to SBS my life was empty the only meaning I had was none. I spent my days and nights fogging my mind with drugs and alcohol. I lied, cheated and stole to keep my addiction hidden from friends and family. I wasn't fooling anyone and not myself.

I have learned that I am an alcoholic and can manage my own life. That only one power will relieve my alcoholism, and that God can and will when He is sought.

Today, I am very thankful for the love that God gives freely. I am thankful for the way God works, and that He leads me to serenity and peace of mind.

The time I've been here at SBS I learned acceptance of others and myself; to stand for what I believe in; to clean house and accept change. When you get knocked down, don't stay down, dust off and carry on.

I am thankful to SBS and the programs offered here, thankful to God for leading me to SBS so that I could be taught.

Anonymous

Our Feed the Community Food Drive was a huge success. We were able to provide food to over 170 families. Many thanks and gratitude to the over 50 volunteers and especially to our sponsors!



In the news...

Cocaine Laced With Veterinary Drug Levamisole Eats Away at Flesh

ABC News By KATIE MOISSE

June 23, 2011

Cocaine cut with the veterinary drug levamisole could be the culprit in a flurry of flesh-eating disease in New York and Los Angeles. The drug, used to deworm cattle, pigs and sheep, can rot the skin off noses, ears and cheeks. And over 80 percent of the country's coke supply contains it.

"It's probably quite a big problem, and we just don't know yet how big a problem it really is," said Dr. Noah Craft, a dermatologist with Los Angeles Biomedical Research Institute. In a case study in the Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology, Craft describes six cocaine users recently plagued by the dark purple patches of dying flesh. And while they happened to hail from the country's coastlines, the problem is national. "It's important for people to know it's not just in New York and L.A. It's in the cocaine supply of the entire U.S.," Craft said. Craft is one of several doctors across the country who have linked the rotting skin to tainted coke. The gruesome wounds surface days after a hit because of an immune reaction that attacks the blood vessels supplying the skin. Without blood, the skin starves and suffocates.

Eighty-two percent of seized cocaine contains levamisole, according to an April 2011 report by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. Why dealers would stretch their stash with levamisole instead of the more traditional fillers, like baking soda, is unclear, although studies in rats suggest the drug acts on the same brain receptors as cocaine. So it might be added to enhance or extend the cocaine's euphoric effects on the cheap.

Despite the widespread contamination, not all of the country's cocaine users experience the flesh-rotting reaction. It appears that some are more vulnerable to the tainted cocaine's effects.

"We don't know who this is going to happen to," said Dr. Lindy Fox, the University of California, San Francisco, dermatologist who first connected the gruesome lesions on cocaine users to levamisole. Similarly, some patients have more extreme reactions than others. Fox said she once saw a photo of a man whose entire body, face included, was black with dying flesh.

Once the drug is cleared from the body, the wounds do heal, leaving behind a shiny scar. Although some people might be more vulnerable to the effects of levamisole, the drug doesn't discriminate based on race or socioeconomic status.

"Rich or poor, black or white," anyone who uses cocaine is at risk, Craft said.

As if rotting skin wasn't enough, levamisole also prevents the bone marrow from producing infection-fighting white blood cells.

"It's a little bit like having HIV," said Craft, adding that without medical attention, the condition can be fatal. "About 10 percent of those patients will die from severe infections. They may be walking around like a time bomb."

<http://abcnews.go.com/Health/Wellness/flesh-eating-cocaine-laced-veterinary-drug-levamisole/story?id=13902353>

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